

INFORMATION ITEM

Update on Implementation of Delta as Place and Delta Marketing Efforts

Summary: Chapter 5 of the Delta Plan includes two regulatory policies and 19 recommendations that support the Delta Plan strategies to protect and enhance the Delta as a Place. The Delta Protection Commission (DPC) and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) are the primary agencies engaged in planning efforts and projects that implement those recommendations. The representatives of both agencies will discuss with the Council their progress and plans for Delta as a Place policy implementation.

Background

The Delta Reform Act declared State policy for the water and ecosystem resources and values of the Delta, as well as those of Delta as a Place (Water Code section 85054):

“Coequal goals” means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.

Chapter 5 of the Delta Plan further describes the values of Delta as a Place by stating:

“The Council envisions a future where the Delta’s unique qualities are recognized and honored. Agriculture will continue to thrive on the Delta’s rural lands; its cities, ports, and rural villages will be desirable to live, work and do business. Visitors to the region will enjoy recreation on and in its waterways, marshes, resorts, parks, and historic legacy communities. The Delta’s land uses and development will be resilient, protecting the rural character of the area, reducing risks to people and property, adjusting to changing conditions, and promoting the ability to recover readily from distress. The Delta’s economic vitality will provide resources to respond to change and to support the families and businesses that make the Delta home.”

The Delta Plan identifies five core strategies to support this vision (page 164):

- *Designate the Delta as a special place*
- *Plan to protect the Delta’s lands and communities*
- *Maintain Delta agriculture as a primary land use, a food source, a key economic sector, and a way of life*
- *Encourage recreation and tourism that allow visitors to enjoy and appreciate the Delta*

- *Sustain a vital Delta economy that includes a mix of agriculture, tourism, recreation, commercial and other industries, and vital components of state and regional infrastructure*

The Delta Plan includes two regulatory policies and 19 recommendations to carry out these strategies, with 24 Administrative Performance Measures in place to measure progress, and 6 Draft Output and Outcome Performance Measures currently undergoing environmental review. Implementation of the Delta Plan is coordinated through the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC). As DPIIC member agencies, the DPC and the Conservancy play key roles in the implementation of the Delta Plan.

The DPC is committed to the protection, maintenance, and enhancement of the Delta environment and economy. The agency achieves this with a focus on agriculture, recreation, and natural resources, while remaining mindful of the importance of the Delta to all Californians.

The Conservancy leads efforts that advance environmental protection in the Delta and the economic well-being of Delta residents. The Conservancy's goal is to implement projects that will result in integrated environmental, economic, and social benefits, all while working in collaboration with local communities, interested groups and State and federal agencies to seek creative opportunities to address challenges and reach agreement for moving these efforts forward.

Today's Briefing

At today's meeting, representatives from the DPC and the Conservancy will update the Council on Delta as Place activities, including Delta marketing efforts.

Delta Protection Commission

DPC Executive Director Erik Vink will discuss the following activities:

Delta Heritage Area Initiative Feasibility Studies

Funded by the Council through an Interagency Agreement, this project includes the preparation of feasibility studies to help turn heritage project concepts into more detailed project plans. These plans would include market demand analysis, estimated costs, and organizational and financial actions, all intended to generate additional interest and funding for the Delta Heritage Area from non-profits, businesses, and foundations. Commission staff has recently finalized a contract with a consultant team to develop the feasibility studies. This work implements or supports the implementation of the following Delta Plan recommendations:

- DP R1 Designate the Delta as a National Heritage Area
- DP R3 Plan for the Vitality and Preservation of Legacy Communities
- DP R12 Encourage Partnerships to Support Recreation and Tourism

Delta Plan Administrative Performance Measure DP R01-02 indicates percent completion in National Heritage Area designation by Congress (see: http://admin-measures-dashboard.deltacouncil.ca.gov/edit-all-view?chapter_value=All&page=4).

Delta Community Action Planning

This project focuses on selecting and prioritizing actions to improve quality of life, economic development, historic preservation, and public safety in the Delta legacy communities. The DPC completed action plans in three communities—Clarksburg (Attachment 1), Courtland, and Walnut Grove—and will be assisting community members with implementation. Staff are expanding the project to Isleton this summer and another community later this year.

This work implements or supports the implementation of the following Delta Plan recommendations:

- DP R1 Designate the Delta as a National Heritage Area
- DP R3 Plan for the Vitality and Preservation of Legacy Communities
- DP R5 Provide Adequate Infrastructure
- DP R12 Encourage Partnerships to Support Recreation and Tourism
- DP R17 Enhance Opportunities for Visitor-serving Businesses

A Draft Delta Plan Output Performance Measure 5.5, currently undergoing environmental review by the Council, would (if adopted by the Council at the conclusion of environmental review) indicate the number of community action plans adopted and initiated.

Delta as Place Interagency Working Group (DAP Group)

The DPC established an ongoing interagency working group on Delta as Place issues, including agricultural sustainability, culture, economic development, energy and transportation infrastructure, recreation, and subsidence reversal. This working group provides a forum for discussion of Delta Plan policies (e.g., DP P2 Respect Local Land Use when Siting Water or Flood Facilities or Restoring Habitats), and all of the recommendations for Chapter 5 Delta as Place (DP R1 – DP R19). The DAP Group consists of representatives of the five Delta counties and State and federal agencies, including Council staff. It meets three times per year.

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy

Executive Officer Campbell Ingram will discuss the following activities:

Delta Marketing

The Conservancy, in collaboration with the DPC and the Delta Marketing Task Force, a consortium of various tourism interests in the Delta, recently finalized a Delta Tourism Awareness 5-year Marketing Plan (Attachment 2) and a Delta-centric tourism website (Attachment 3). The Marketing Plan is a tool for the Delta community to reference in implementing creative strategies to attract visitors. The tourism website highlights the many activities and businesses visitors can enjoy while exploring the Delta and can be found at www.visitCAdelta.com.

This consortium provides a forum for coordination and implementation of the following Delta Plan recommendations:

- DP R3 Plan for the Vitality and Preservation of Legacy Communities

- DP R9 Encourage Agritourism
- DP R12 Encourage Partnerships to Support Recreation and Tourism
- DP R14 Enhance Nature-based Recreation
- DP R17 Enhance Opportunities for Visitor-serving Businesses

Draft Delta Plan Outcome Performance Measures 5.6 and 5.8, currently undergoing environmental review by the Council, would (if adopted by the Council at the conclusion of environmental review) measure increases in regional recreation opportunities and Delta recreation and tourism trends.

Delta Signage Improvement

Funded by the Council through an Interagency Agreement, the purpose of this project is to increase awareness and improve the resident and visitor experience through improved road signage within the Delta. The Conservancy is currently embarking upon a planning effort with the objective of both improving and adding to current signage (e.g. "Welcome to the Delta").

This project implements or supports the implementation of the following Delta Plan recommendations:

- DP R1 Designate the Delta as a National Heritage Area
- DP R2 Designate State Route 160 as a National Scenic Byway
- DP R3 Plan for the Vitality and Preservation of Legacy Communities
- DP R9 Encourage Agritourism
- DP R12 Encourage Partnerships to Support Recreation and Tourism
- DP R14 Enhance Nature-based Recreation
- DP R17 Enhance Opportunities for Visitor-serving Businesses

Regional Planning

The Cache Slough planning process began in November 2016, bringing together representatives from Solano and Yolo Counties; the Yolo, Solano, and Dixon Resource Conservation Districts; the Solano County Water Agency; Reclamation District 2068; and several State agencies and consultants. Phase I of the planning effort was completed in early July. The Conservancy is working with project partners to scope Phase II of this effort, which will identify Proposition 1 eligible projects through development of an integrated resource management plan for the Cache Slough region.

This process has demonstrated the value of collaborative planning with advanced technology and has greatly improved understanding and relationships among planning participants.

This planning process has implemented or supported the following Delta Plan policies and recommendations:

- DP P2 Respect Local Land Use When Siting Water or Flood Facilities or Restoring Habitats.
- DP R4 Buy Rights of Way from Willing Sellers When Feasible
- DP R10 Encourage Wildlife friendly Farming

- DP R16 Encourage Recreation on Public Lands

Delta Carbon Methodology

The Conservancy has worked for several years with agencies, landowners, and academics to promote carbon management practices in the Delta to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, curtail subsidence and restore elevations, and increase biodiversity. On April 25, 2017, the American Carbon Registry (ACR) adopted the California Wetland protocol that includes a methodology for managed wetlands and rice cultivation in the Delta and coastal wetlands. The Conservancy is working closely with several agencies and landowner partners to develop pilot projects that engage the new protocol to demonstrate that revenue can be realized from the voluntary carbon market for these practices. The Air Resources Board has expressed interest in adopting the protocol into the compliance program provided that the ACR protocol is demonstrating success. The Conservancy intends to use these tools to incentivize land use change to address some of the most challenging threats to the Delta.

This work implements the following Delta Plan recommendations:

- DP R7 Subsidence Reduction and Reversal
- DP R10 Encourage Wildlife Friendly Farming

A Draft Delta Plan Outcome Performance Measure 5.2, currently undergoing environmental review by the Council, would (if adopted by the Council at the conclusion of environmental review) measure the number of acres of subsidence reversal and carbon sequestration.

Fiscal Information

Not applicable.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Clarksburg Community Action Plan
Attachment 2: Delta Tourism Awareness 5-Year Marketing Plan
Attachment 3: Screenshots of visitcadelta.com

Contact

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